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# MONTANA LETTER

PROCUREMENT SECTION  
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April 26, 1973

## ERTS IMAGERY STUDY EXPANDED

During 1972 a number of ASCS offices throughout the country were experimenting with imagery (a term used to include various types of satellite photography) from the Earth Resources Technology Satellite or ERTS. A total of 18 counties were involved nationwide and six of those counties were also collecting "ground truth" data for the Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston, Texas. Hill county was one of the counties selected to collect ground truth data which meant that once each 18 days during the growing season representatives of the county office visited a predesignated area of the county and recorded the status of crops being grown or harvested. This ground data was sent to the Houston center.

While the results are not yet in, the study does show some promise that space imagery can be used to identify growing crops and tell something of their condition.

ERTS is now scheduled to remain in orbit and transmit data for a considerably longer period than the one year originally planned. As a result, a further study of the feasibility of identifying wheat from ERTS imagery has been undertaken. Six additional study counties have been selected to parti-

cipate in this effort. They are Glacier, Liberty, and Toole in Montana, and Divide, Williams and Burke in North Dakota.

County executive directors and district directors from the six counties, as well as Hill county, recently met at the State office for a briefing on their role in the new satellite study.

They are asked to select a test site of 10 square miles where ground truth data will be collected, coincident with the satellite's passage overhead. The ground truth data collection efforts are ex-



Members of the Negotiating committee for the Montana State Association of County Office Employees enjoy a lighter moment while in Bozeman recently to meet with their counterpart committee from ASCS. MASCOE negotiators are (from left) George Withrow, MASCOE president and McCone county executive director; Hazel Michel, Valley county program assistant; LaVon Adair, MASCOE secretary and Treasure county chief clerk, and Jerry Schissler, Big Horn county program assistant. ASCS negotiators are Roy Killenbeck, State committee chairman; Lyall Schaefer, district director; Max Maberry, administrative officer, and Marjorie Williams, secretary.



pected to continue throughout the entire 1973 crop season, including seedbed preparation, planting, growth, and harvest. The ERTS orbit provides coverage of the same area once every 18 days.

### SHEEPMEN GET PAYMENTS

Montana sheepmen are receiving payments totaling nearly \$3.8 million this month to supplement their returns from wool



and unshorn lambs marketed last year. The payments are at the rate of \$105.70 for each \$100 received from the sale of wool, and \$1.48 per hundred-weight of liveweight unshorn lambs sold.

Nationally, wool and lamb incentive payments on 1972 marketings are expected to total nearly \$65 million.

The payments are designed to raise the national average return for all wool from the 35¢ a pound received by producers to the 72¢ incentive level. Deductions to support market development activities for wool and lambs are made from payments at the rate of 1½¢ a pound from shorn wool payments, and 7½¢ per hundredweight of unshorn lambs.

Payment rates are down considerably from a year ago when \$271.10 was paid for each \$100 received from the sale of wool during 1971.

The incentive program continues for sales this year with an incentive level of 72¢ a pound. However, wool prices now are up sufficiently that it appears likely no incentive payments will be required.

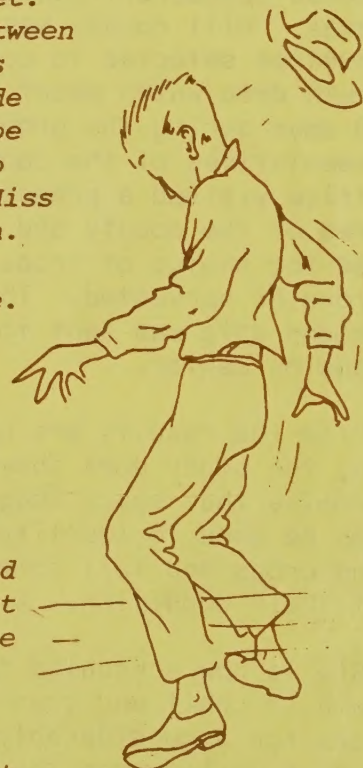
### YOU GUYS. WATCH YOUR STEP

We don't make a lot of noise about it but you're probably aware that we do encourage safe working habits and attitudes by everyone associated with ASCS. We think you'll like the following humorous but serious dissertation written by Don Wold, chairman of the Clayton County ASC Committee, Iowa.

*Morning dawns clear and warm. Go to feed hogs and remember that COC meets tomorrow and committee has this month's safety meeting. Resolve to keep track of all safe habits today so can report on same tomorrow. Reason that past 45 years have been very safe, otherwise not reach 45.*

*Sows real hungry this morning, fight for corn in basket. Boar pig goes between boss's legs, boss goes down. Decide boar pig should be taught lesson, so kick in snout. Miss and go down again. Decide to leave well enough alone. After all -- SAFETY FIRST!*

*Go to jump fence, but toe catches in top wire and go flat on ground. Ground soft, doesn't hurt much. Go to house for breakfast. Wife not up so put coffee on. Get out grapefruit and knife to cut same. Check knife with thumb to see if sharp and after observing blood running, decide sharp enough to cut grapefruit. Coffee not perking, check burner to see if on. Put good thumb on burner (OW!!) Burner was on. Should have used cut thumb.*

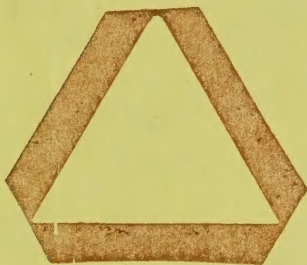




Finish breakfast and go to start day's work. Get out tractor and mower to clip diverted acres. Drive to gas barrel to fill up and, very safety-conscious, shut off engine before filling tank. Go to field, put mower in gear, everything going smoothly. Reflect on safety meeting - have to think up something. Persistent clatter intrudes on thoughts, notice power-take-off shield wobbling. Stop to fix. Bolt loose, get out wrenches to tighten. Too strong, bolt breaks. Take shield off and hang on fence, will make good corn variety market next year.

Start mowing again, much quieter now. Should be done by noon. Get to corner of field and start down other side when -- BANG! Get off tractor to investigate and find four section harrow where mower bar should be. Wire mower together and head back to buildings. Decide only thing to do is take mess to town for

repairs. Head out on highway and shift to road gear. Really moving now. Lots of traffic, decide to watch motorists for violation and safety hazards for report at safety meeting tomorrow.



Remember SMV emblem still in shed and not on tractor. Oh well, not too important.

Truck passes, doing at least 60. Cuts across yellow line after going by. Truck drivers are habitual violators of law.

Meet boy and girl both sitting on driver's side of car. Wave at them but get no response. Suppose no free hands to wave back. Make mental note to tell office staff not to sit so close while driving.

Go over top of hill, start down. Hear squeal of tires, glance back to see old grandmother go past doing 80. Women are poor drivers and real law breakers.



Glance back again and see patrol car fast approaching with lights flashing. Startled, jam on brakes. Forgot to lock brakes together, tractor swerves across center line. Patrol car swerves into ditch. Stop to give aid to stranded motorist, first aid if necessary. Learned this at last safety meeting.

Patrolman comes quickly from car, not smiling. Asks to see driver's license. Tell him never carry billfold on tractor. Asks where SMV emblem is. Tell him in shed. Asks name and address. Tell him.

Tell him about being county committeeman. Cop not impressed. Chairman even. Cop still not impressed. Norwegian even. Cop spits. Dumb Cop.

Volunteer to pull car out of ditch. Maybe if pull car out real quick, cop not be so mad anymore. Cop says OK.

Hook log chain on bumper. Rev up engine. Muddy foot slips off clutch, tractor jerks bumper off car. Laugh a little, but cop not laugh. Real stick in mud.

Finally get car out, bumper in trunk. Old grandmother comes back from town doing 90. Point out to cop but ignores and keeps writing out tickets. Obvious case of neglect of duty.

After while cop leaves and so get on tractor and head for implement shop. Decide not much material gathered for safety meeting tomorrow.

### WHEAT QUOTA PROCLAIMED

In a situation reminiscent of 1970, a national wheat allotment of 58 million acres and a national wheat marketing quota of 1,692 million bushels has been proclaimed for 1972. Marketing quotas would become effective only if





approved by producers in a referendum which cannot be conducted later than August 1, 1973.

The same situation occurred in 1970 when the Food and Agriculture Act of 1965 was expiring and, without new legislation, the basic allotment and quota provisions of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 would have become effective. A national allotment of 43.5 million acres and a marketing quota of 1,210 million bushels was announced. Congressional resolutions delayed holding the referendum, and on November 30, 1970, the Agricultural Act of 1970 was enacted. This is the legislation which is expiring this year. Unless new legislation is passed, the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 will become effective for the 1974 crop.

This Act requires the Secretary of Agriculture to determine a national marketing quota for wheat for any marketing year if the total supply of wheat for such marketing year will, in the absence of a marketing quota program, likely be excessive. Without marketing quotas, USDA says, the carryover of wheat is likely to be higher than desirable at the end of the 1974-75 marketing year.

In the event new legislation is not enacted, and a referendum is scheduled, State and county allotments, price support level and domestic allocation percentage or diversion percentage will be announced.

### COMMITTEEMAN KILLED

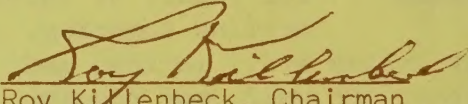
Walter Miller, Jr., a Lodge Grass rancher serving his first term on the Big Horn County committee, was killed recently in an automobile accident. He had served for many years on his ASC community committee and last year was first alternate to the county committee. He had also served as a director in the Federal Land Bank

Association and in other community activities.

We extend our sympathy to Mrs. Miller, the two sons, and other relatives.

### SPREADING IT THIN ... AND QUICK

MONTANA'S WHEAT BINS on April 1 were the lowest they have been since 1967. The Montana Crop and Livestock Reporting Service says on that date only 63 million bushels were in store, 33 percent less than a year ago.... U.S. WHEAT STOCKS at the beginning of this month totaled 923 million bushels -- down 24 percent from a year ago.....WHEAT EXPORTS from Pacific Northwest ports during the period July 1972 through March 1973 were 197.1 million bushels. During the comparable period a year earlier 97.2 million bushels were shipped out.....PRICE SUPPORT LOAN and purchase levels for 1973-crop rye, flaxseed, and dry edible beans will all be the same as last year. The National average support levels will be rye, 89¢ per bushel for grade No. 2 or better; flaxseed, \$2.50 per bushel for No. 1 grade; and dry beans, \$6.40 per hundredweight.....

  
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